

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A program supply method for transmitting a program from a server via a network to a user system to which one or more expansion units are attached, the method comprising:

transmitting a request from the user system via the network to the server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server;

transmitting an operating environment of the user system from the user system via the network to the server;

providing, from the server to the user system, a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in the operating environment of the user system based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system;

after a program is selected from the program list, transmitting the program from the server to the user system;

executing the program on the user system after the program is supplied from the server and installed on the user system to thereby confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program; and

after receiving confirmation at the server of proper operation of each expansion unit of the user system, requesting payment for the program.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The program supply method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising displaying the result of the judgment as to whether the program is operable or not in the operating environment of the user system.

Claims 3-5 (Canceled).

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The program supply method set forth in claim 1, further comprising storing the result of the judgment as data of the user system in the server when the program is judged to be inoperable.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The program supply method set forth in claim 1, further comprising expanding functions of the user system in which the program supplied from the server via the network to the user system is installed.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A program supply method, comprising:
transmitting a request from a user system to a server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the user system to which one or more expansion units are attached;
transmitting an operating environment of the user system from the user system to the server;
providing, from the server to the user system, a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in an operating environment of the user system based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system;
receiving by the server via a network from the user system an order for a program selected from the program list;
transmitting the program in response to the order via the network to the user system;
executing, in the user system, the transmitted program to thereby confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program; and
requesting by the server payment for the program after receiving confirmation of proper operation of each expansion unit of the user system.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The program supply method set forth in claim 8, further comprising requesting the user system by the server to inform the server of an operating environment via the network.

Claim 10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The program supply method set forth in claim 8, further comprising storing by the server of an operating environment of the user system.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A program supply system which supplies programs from a server via a network to a user system to which one or more expansion units are attached, wherein:

said user system includes transmitting means for transmitting a request to the server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the user system, and operating environment judging means for judging an operating environment of the user system, and before having a program supplied, the transmitting means transmits the judged operating environment via the network to the server,

said server includes list generating means for generating a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in the operating environment of the user system based on the judged operating environment transmitted from the user system, and transmitting means for transmitting the program list via the network to the user system,

said user system selects a program from the program list according to an input thereto,

said user system executes the program after the program is supplied from the server and installed on the user system to thereby confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program, and

if said server receives confirmation of proper operation of each expansion unit of the user system, said server requests payment for the program from said user system.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The program supply system set forth in claim 12, wherein said user system includes:

operation input means to be operated by a user; and

display means for displaying data,

said user system is activated in response to operation on the operation input means, and the user system transmits the operating environment judged by the operation environment judging means via the network to the server, and displays the result of the judgment given by the operation judging means of the server on the display means.

Claim 14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Original): The program supply system set forth in claim 12, wherein said server further includes storing means for storing data of the user system.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The program supply system set forth in claim 12, wherein said user system expands its functions when the program supplied via the network from the server is installed.

Claim 17 (Original): The program supply system set forth in claim 12, wherein said user system is any of a personal computer, a portable terminal, and a complex digital image forming apparatus.

Claims 18 and 19 (Canceled).

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The program supply system set forth in claim 15, wherein said server stores the result of the judgment by the operation judging means when the program is judged to be inoperable.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): A program supply system which supplies programs from a server via a network to a user system to which one or more expansion units are attached, wherein:
said user system includes:
operating environment judging means for judging an operating environment of the user system; and

user-side communication means for transmitting data to and receiving data from the server via the network, the transmitted data including a request to the server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the user system, and the judged operating environment,

said server includes:

server-side communication means for transmitting data to and receiving data from the user system via the network;

list generating means for generating a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in the operating environment of the user system based on the judged operating environment transmitted from the user system, and transmitting the program list via the server-side communication means to the user system,

and further wherein

said user system is operable to execute the program after the program is supplied from the server and installed on the user system to thereby confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program, and

upon said server receiving confirmation of the proper operation of each expansion unit of the user system, said server requests said user system for payment for the program.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): A program supply system which transmits a program in response to an order received via a network from a user system, to which one or more expansion units are attached, to the user system via the network, the system comprising:

server-side list generating means for generating, in response to a request transmitted to the program supply system from the user system without selecting specific program-related information, a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in an operating environment of the user system based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system, and transmitting the program list to the user system;

server-side operation judging means for confirming an operation state in the user system of each expansion unit by a program selected from the program list; and

accounting means for asking a user to pay for the program after proper operation of the program in the user system is confirmed.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): A program receiving method, comprising:
transmitting, by a user system to which one or more expansion units are attached, a request to a server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server;
transmitting, by the user system, an operating environment of the user system to the server;
receiving, by the user system, a program list sent from the server which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in an operating environment of the user system based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system;
transmitting by the user system via a network to the server an order for a program selected from the program list;
receiving the program from the server via the network in response to the order;
executing the program to thereby confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program;
transmitting a notification of operation confirmation via the network to the server to allow the server to confirm the proper operation state of each expansion unit of the user system;
and
receiving a request for payment for the program from the server after the proper operation state is confirmed.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): A program receiving apparatus, to which one or more expansion units are attached, for receiving a program from a server via a network, comprising:

user-side transmitting means for transmitting a request via the network to the server without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the user system, and for

transmitting an operating environment of the user system from the user system via the network to the server;

user-side receiving means for receiving from the server a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in an operating environment of the program receiving apparatus based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system and for receiving from the server a program selected from the program list;

user-side operation judging means for executing the received program, thereby confirming proper operation of each expansion unit by the program;

operation confirmation notification transmitting means for, upon the user-side operation judging means executing the received program, transmitting a notification of operation confirmation to the server to allow the server to confirm the proper operation state of each expansion unit; and

the user-side receiving means receiving a request for payment for the program from the server after the proper operation state is confirmed.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): A program transmitting and receiving system, comprising:

a program supply system comprising:

server-side list generating means for providing to a user system to which one or more expansion units are attached a program list which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in an operating environment of the user system;

server-side operation judging means for confirming an operation state in the user system of a program selected from the program list; and

accounting means for asking a user to pay for the program after confirming the operation of each expansion unit by the program;

a program receiving apparatus comprising:

user-side transmitting means for transmitting a request to the program supply system without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the program supply system to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the program

supply system to the user system, and for transmitting the operating environment of the user system from the user system to the server;

user-side operation judging means for executing the program, thereby confirming proper operation of each expansion unit of the user system; and

operation confirmation notification transmitting means for, upon executing the program, transmitting a notification of operation confirmation to the server to allow the server to confirm the proper operation state of each expansion unit of the user system; and

wherein the program supply system and the program receiving apparatus are connected to each other via a network, and

wherein the prioritized program list is based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system.

Claim 26 (Original): A computer-readable recording medium having a program for executing the program receiving method of claim 1 recorded thereon.

Claim 27 (Original): A computer-readable recording medium having a program for executing the program receiving method of claim 23 recorded thereon.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The program supply method of claim 1, further comprising:

sending a confirmation to the server if the proper operation is confirmed by the executing.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The program supply system of claim 12, wherein said user system is further operable to send a confirmation to the server if the proper operation is confirmed by the execution.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The program supply system of claim 21, wherein said user system is further operable to send a confirmation to the server if the proper operation is confirmed by the execution.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): A method performed by a user system, to which one or more expansion units are attached, to obtain a program from a server, comprising:

transmitting from the user system to the server a request without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the user system;

transmitting from the user system to the server an operating environment of the user system;

receiving from the server a program list prioritizing programs that are likely to be operable in the operating environment of the user system based on the operating environment transmitted from the user system;

sending to the server a request for one of the programs selected from the list;

receiving the selected program from the server;

installing the received program;

executing the installed program to confirm proper operation of each expansion unit by the program;

sending to the server a notification regarding the confirmation of operation; and

receiving a request for payment for the program from the server after the sending of notification.

Claim 32 (Canceled).

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): A program supply method for supplying programs to an image formation apparatus to which one or more expansion units are attached, the method comprising:

transmitting from the image formation apparatus to a server a request without selecting specific program-related information, the request requesting the server to provide a list of programs which can be supplied by the server to the image formation apparatus;

transmitting from the image formation apparatus to the server an operating environment of the image formation apparatus;

receiving from a server a program list, based on the operating environment transmitted from the image formation apparatus, which prioritizes programs that are likely to be operable in the operating environment of the image formation apparatus;

sending to the server a request for one of the programs selected from the list;

receiving the selected program from the server;

installing the received program;

executing the installed program to confirm proper operation of the each expansion unit by the program in an operating environment of the image formation apparatus;

sending to the server a notification regarding the confirmation of proper operation; and

receiving a request for payment for the program from the server after the sending of notification.